REMARKS

Claims 1-4 have been rejected by the Examiner 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Masson et al. US Patent 6,818,696. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present invention is directed to pneumatic tires, which contain sidewalls having a specific rubber composition. Thus, when considering tire sidewalls, the specific properties sought to be achieved in the tire include a reduction in rolling resistance and an improvement of steering stability without causing a decrease in the tire durability. This is achieved, according to the present invention, by providing a pneumatic tire having a sidewall made of a rubber composition which comprises a rubber component, 20 to 70 parts by weight of inorganic filler and 5 to 35 parts by weight of polypropylene powder, based on a 100 parts by weight of the rubber component. The amount of the polypropylene powder must also be less than or equal to (the amount of inorganic filler plus the amount of the polypropylene powder)/2. Advantageously, the polypropylene powder has an particle size of at most 500 mm. Thus, the entire focus of the present invention is concerned with a tire sidewall containing specific properties.

The Masson et al. reference US Patent 6,818,696B2 is directed to a rubber composition usable in the vulcanized state as a tire safety support which is intended to be mounted on a wheel rim within a tire. The prior art reference is also directed to a safety support which is capable of supporting a tread of a tire in the event of a drop in inflation pressure. Thus, the Masson et al. patent, being concerned with a tire safety support, does not even remotely contemplate the use of its rubber composition as a sidewall for a tire which possesses a reduced rolling resistance and improved steering stability without decreasing tire durability. A safety support mounted on a wheel rim

inside a vehicle tire for supporting a tire tread in the event of a drop of inflation pressure can not even be remotely compared with a vehicle tire sidewall which requires specific properities not required for achieving the patentees desires, that is, a tire safety support mounted on a wheel rim for supporting the tread of a tire.

Since a safety support is fundamentally different from a tire sidewall and since the Masson et al. patent neither describes nor suggest use of its rubber composition for a vehicle sidewall, one skilled in the art, with the reference before him, would not reach the conclusion that based on the descriptions in the Masson et al. patent, that the rubber composition disclosed therein could be effectively used for a tire sidewall.

Accordingly, in view of the above amendments and remarks reconsideration of the rejection and allowance of all the claims in the present application are respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By _____

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